

Message Text

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 01 FRANKF 02162 221107Z
ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15
USIA-06 TRSE-00 /058 W
-----221114Z 037347 /22

R 211601Z MAR 77
FM AMCONSUL FRANKFURT
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7542
AMEMBASSY BONN
INFO AMCONSUL BREMEN
AMCONSUL DUESSELDORF
AMCONSUL HAMBURG
AMCONSUL MUNICH
AMCONSUL STTUTTGART
USMISSION BERLIN
USCINCEUR
USAREUR
USAFE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE FRANKFURT 2162

USCINCEUR, USAREUR AND USAFE FOR POLADS

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PINT, GW
SUBJECT: CDU WINS COMMUNAL ELECTIONS IN HESSEN

1. THE CDU WON A STUNNING VICTORY WIDELY DESCRIBED AS A
LANDSLIDE-- IN THE HESSEN-WIDE COMMUNAL ELECTIONS ON
MARCH 20, UNSEATING SPD ABSOLUTE MAJORITIES IN FIVE
OF THE LAND'S SIX CHARTERED CITIES AND MAKING LARGE
GAINS IN ALMOST ALL COUNTIES AND COMMUNITIES.
SEVENTY-FIVE PERCENT OF THE 3.9. MILLION ELIGIBLE
VOTERS PARTICIPATED IN THE ELECTION; A DECREASE
COMAPRED TO 1972, WHEN THE VOTER TURNOUT (SPURRED
LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 02 FRANKF 02162 221107Z

BY AN UPCOMING FEDERAL ELECTION) REACHED 81.4 PERCENT.
THE HESSEN COMMUNAL ELECTION IS THE ONLY ONE
SCHEDULED TO TAKEPLACE IN THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC THIS
YEAR AND IS CONSEQUENTLY REGARDED AS A BELLWETHER
BY SOME OBSERVERS.

2. IN FRANKFURT THE CDU WON AN ABSOLUTE MAJORITY

ON MARCH 20, PUTTING AN END TO 30 YEARS OF SPD RULE IN THE CITY. (HOWEVER, SINCE THE LORD MAYOR IS ELECTED BY THE CITY PARLIAMENT FOR SIX-YEAR TERM THE SPD'S RUDI ARNDT WILL GOVERN UNTIL APRIL 1978 WHEN HE WILL BE SUCCEDED BY CDU BUNDESTAG DEPUTY WALTER WALLMANN WHO LED THE CDU DRIVE IN FRANKFURT.) IN WIESBADEN AND LAHN THE CDU ALSO WON ABSOLUTE MAJORITIES; THE SPD, WHICH HAD FORMERLY CONTROLLED ALL THREE CITIES, SUFFERED HEAVY LOSSES IN DARMSTADT AND OFFENBACH THE CDU REPLACED THE SPD AS THE LARGEST PARTY BUT FELL SHORT OF THE 50 PERCENT MARK, WHILE IN KASSEL THE SPD ALTHOUGH LOOSING HEAVILY MANAGED TO REMAIN THE LARGEST PARTY AND WILL CONTINUE TO GOVERN BY A ONE-SEAT MAJORITY IN THE CITY PARLIAMENT.

3. RESULTS IN THE COUNTRY COUNCIL (LANDKREIS) ELECTIONS WERE SIMILAR TO THOSE IN THE LARGE CITIES, WITH THE CDU CLEARLY THE VICTOR. THE SPD LOST VOTES IN 17 OF THE 18 DISTRICTS WHERE THE RESULTS HAVE BEEN ANNOUNCED: THE CDU PICKED UP VOTES IN ALL 18 DISTRICTS. ON THE COMMUNITY LEVEL THE CDU BECAME THE LARGEST PARTY OVERALL; ITS SHARE OF THE VOTE INCREASED AN AVERAGE OF MORE THAN 10 PERCENT.

4. EVEN TAKING INTO ACCOUNT THE HISTORICAL PATTERN IN WHICH THE BONN GOVERNMENT PARTY OF PARTIES TEND TO LOSE IN LOCAL ELECTIONS FOLLOWING NATIONAL ELECTIONS THE OUTCOME IN HESSEN REMAINS A SEVERE DEFEAT FOR THE PSPD LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 03 FRANKF 02162 221107Z

AND A MAJOR VICTORY FOR THE CDU, THE EXTENT OF WHICH SURPRISED EVEN CDU POLITICIANS. SPD LOSSES WERE ESPECIALLY SEVERE IN SOUTH HESSEN WHERE THE PARTY HAS A REPUTATION FOR DOCTRINAIRE LEFT-WING CAUSES. IT WAS LESS SEVERE IN NORTH HESSEN WHERE THE SPD HAS GENERALLY BEEN DOMINATED BY ITS MORE CONSERVATIVE ELEMENTS. WHILE THE FDP BARELY MANAGED TO HOLD ITS OWN STATEWIDE, IT LOST SUBSTANTIALLY FOR ITS SMALL SIZE IN MAJOR URBAN CENTERS.

5. A VARIETY OF CAUSES HAVE CONTRIBUTED TO THE OUTCOME. NATIONAL LEVEL EVENTS PARTICULARLY THE PENSION AFFAIR AND MOST RECENTLY THE MUCH PUBLICIZED WIRETAPPING INCIDENTS NO DOUBT HAD SOME ADVERSE EFFECT ON BOTH THE SPD AND FDP. ASSERTIONS OF LOCAL SCANDALS INVOLVING ALLEGATIONS THAT FRANKFURT LORD MAYOR RUDI ARNDT MAY HAVE ACCEPTED A CONTRIBUTION TO THE SPD PARTY COFFERS IN RETURN FOR BUILDING RIGHTS AT THE FRANKFURT AIRPORT AND VESTIGES OF THE SCANDAL INVOLVING THE HESSISCHES

LANDESBANK DID NOT HELP THE IMAGE OF THE SOCIAL DEMOCRATS. LOCAL ISSUES WERE IMPORTANT IN SOME CASES ESPECIALLY IN LAHN CITY WHERE AN ADMINISTRATIVE REFORM MERGING THE CITIES OF GIESSEN AND WETZLAR HAS BEEN UNDER HEAVY FIRE AND DREW A HIGHLY ADVERS VOTER REASCTION. IN DARMSTADT WHERE THE SPD LOST ALMOST 15 PERCENT OF THE VOTE COMPARED TO 1972 AND WHERE EIGHT PERCENT WERE GRANERED BY INDEPENDENT VOTER GROUPS LOCAL ISSUES ALSO PALYED AN IMPORTANT BUT BY NO MEANS EXCLUSIVE ROEL. SPD POLITICIANS HAVE ALSO BLAMED THE LOW VOTER TURNOUT (SEE PARA ONE ABOVE) FOR PART OF THEIR DEFEAT BUT JUST WHO GAINED OR LOST BY THIS FACTOR IS IN REALITY AN OPEN QUESTION.

6. THE BIG WINNER IN HESSEN ON MARCH 20 WAS ALFRED DREGGER. HE ACCOMPLISHED WHAT HE SETOUT TO DO, LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 04 FRANKF 02162 221107Z

NAMELY, TO CAPTURE HESSEN'S "RED CITY HALLS". DREGGER'S LATEST SUCCESS COMES ON TOP OF THE CDU'S VERY GOOD SHOWING IN HESSEN AT BUNDESTAG ELECTION ON OCTOBER 3, 1976, AND THE RESULTS OF THE 1974 LANDTAG ELECTIONS IN WHICH DREGGER MADE HIS PARTY OF THE FIRST TIME HESSEN'S LARGEST, MISSING AN ABSOLUTE MAJORITY BY TWO AND A HALF PERCNET OF THE VOTE. DREGGER' STRATEGY CONCENTRATING ON GRASSROOTS LEVEL ORGANIZATION AND COMPAIGNING AS WELL AS HIS HARD LINE VIS-A-VIS THE FDP ESPECIALLY ON THE ISSUE OF EDUCATION POLICY HAVE PAID OFF. WITH THIS LATEST VICTORY IN HIS POCKET ALFRED DREGGER'S POWER AND INFLUENCE ON THE NATIONAL LEVEL OF THE CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATS WILL ALSO GROW. HE IS NOW LIKELY TO TURN HIS IMMEDIATE ATTENTION AND POLITICAL ABILITIES TO THE HESSEN LANDTAG ELECTIONS TO BE HELD IN THE FALL OF 1978 WITH THE AIM OF HAVING THE CDU TAKE OVER THE SPD/FDP COALITION IN WIESBADEN. IF PRESENT TRENDS CONTINUE HE STANDS A BETTER THAN EVEN CHANCE OF DOING JUST THAT. (DETAILED RESULTS OF ELECTION OUTCOME WILL BE REPORTED BY AIRGRAM.)LEHMANN

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: ELECTION RESULTS, POLITICAL PARTIES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 21-Mar-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977FRANKF02162
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770097-0953
Format: TEL
From: FRANKFURT
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19770340/aaaabilp.tel
Line Count: 161
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: fd7f5cb5-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 09-Nov-2004 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3051851
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: CDU WINS COMMUNAL ELECTIONS IN HESSEN
TAGS: PINT, GE, CDU
To: STATE BONN
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/fd7f5cb5-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009